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26 February 1948

MEMORANDUM TO: Assistant Director
Reports and Estimates

FROM: Chief, Map Branch

SUBJECT: The Map Library Division as an integral part of
the Map Branch.

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1. Reference is made to the report, dated 26 July 1947, of a joint survey by [REDACTED] in which it was recommended that all three parts of the Map Branch be transferred as a unit to the CIA. This recommendation stemmed from the fact that both [REDACTED] as a result of their review of the Map Branch activities, were convinced that the Branch formed an operating whole and that any severance of unified control and responsibility for the activities of the Branch would result in decreased efficiency. This recommendation also placed the Map Branch within ORE, where it belongs because of its responsibilities for cartographic research, map evaluations, map intelligence studies, the coordination of intelligence production and geographic research.

2. There have been indications, both from the Reference Center and from the Management Branch, A & M, that serious consideration may be given to the transfer of the map reference services of the Branch to the administrative control of the Reference Center. There are a large number of very real arguments for the retention of the Map Library Division as part of the unified map facility represented by the present Map Branch.

3. There is considerable precedence for having the Map Library an integral unit of the Map Branch.

a. The Department of State, prior to the formation of its Map Division, maintained a map library and reference collection of geographical materials within its Office of the Geographer and later as a Branch within its Division of Geography and Cartography. All maps, atlases, and related publications received by the Department were forwarded to the Map Library for retention and for loan.

b. The Office of Strategic Services, during the war, had a large Map Division which included the Map Library of the OSS. Administrative instructions issued by the OSS clearly stated that the Map Library of the Map Division was completely separate from any other reference service within that organization.

c. The Department

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c. The Department of State, in establishing its Map Division early in 1946, placed the combined former map libraries of the Department, the OSE, and the FEA within the Map Library Branch of the Map Division. The Map Division was allotted funds for the purchase of new maps and other geographical reference materials for its collection.

d. The Map Library, as now constituted, has been developed during the past six years through the combined efforts of many geographers who were attached to the Map Division of the OSE and to the Division of Geography and Cartography in the Department of State. The current body of intelligence and reference material included in the collection of the Map Library was developed through careful selection and professional assistance by the staffs of these Divisions. Maintenance and utilization has been geared, in large part, to the requirements of primary map users of the government agencies. The present effective services performed by the Map Library Division have resulted from its position as an integral operating unit of the Map Branch and its predecessors.

4. There are certain major ways in which the Map Library Division is closely integrated into the total operation of the Map Branch.

a. The Map Branch, and its predecessors, have directed the foreign procurement of maps and related materials for many years through the facilities offered by the Foreign Service and, during the war, by trained map procurement officers assigned to foreign countries by the OSE. A little over one year ago the Map Branch initiated a coordinated foreign procurement program for collecting maps and related materials and map intelligence, not only for the Department of State but also for other interested agencies. This program is guided by the joint planning of the staffs of the three Divisions of the Branch, supported by the cooperation of agencies represented on the presently operating Inter-Agency Map Procurement Coordination Committee. This program is therefore a Branch activity in which all three Divisions participate. It would be extremely difficult to properly guide this foreign procurement program if the participating staffs of the three Divisions were not under a single administrative head.

b. The Map Library collection forms the working files of the Map Intelligence and Cartography Divisions. Because of the peculiar character of map research, extensive files are required and it would be impossible, from a practical point of view, to maintain adequate working files for these Divisions separate from the Map Library collection.

c. The requirements of the Map Intelligence and Cartography Divisions reflect the needs of the other primary map users in the Departments represented on the IAC. It is proper, therefore, that the personnel of these Divisions advise the Map Library Division regarding priorities to be considered in the processing of various parts of the collection.

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d. The Map

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d. The Map Intelligence Division furnishes essential assistance to the Map Library staff in evaluating and selecting map materials requested for specific purposes where professional knowledge of the content and adequacy of information is required.

e. In the aggregate, many other ways in which the Map Library Division is interlocked with the rest of the Branch form a major justification for the unity of the Map Branch. Some of these interdependencies are briefly listed below:

(1) Frequent interchange of most current information relating to map publishing agencies and new contacts in the mapping field between the staffs of the Map Library and Map Intelligence Divisions.

(2) In performing its function of distributing maps produced by the Cartography Division, the Map Library Division asks advice from the staff of the Map Intelligence Division regarding the advisability of requesting reruns of maps low in stock and of requesting revisions of these maps on the basis of new information.

(3) The Map Library requests the Map Intelligence Division to review all maps produced by the Cartography Division so that appropriate comments may be entered in the reference files for use in answering inquiries.

(4) Generally the maps requested of the Map Library Division by the Cartography Division are evaluated by the Map Intelligence Division before they are used as base materials.

(5) The Map Library Division seeks the advice of the staff of the Map Intelligence Division in evaluating its holdings in terms of the intelligence needs of the Government.

(6) The Map Library Division, where possible, adjusts its cataloging program to the priority needs of the Map Intelligence Division.

(7) The Map Intelligence Division evaluates map series held by the Map Library Division and recommends that obsolete series be eliminated from the collection by transfer to other more appropriate depositories.

(8) The staff of the Map Intelligence Division assists personnel of the Map Library in solving some of the more difficult problems of interpretation involved in cataloging certain maps.

5. The unity

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5. The unity of the Map Branch, as now constituted, has parallels in other government agencies. This unity has been developed through experience.

a. The Army Map Service constitutes the map facility for the Department of the Army. It is composed of a map library with its reference collection, a map research organization, and a map-making group, all under the administrative control of the Commanding Officer of the Army Map Service. It is well-known, of course, that there are document and book reference facilities in other parts of the Department which are not related organizationally to the facilities in the Army Map Service.

b. The Aeronautical Chart Service is the map facility for the Department of the Air Force. It is comprised of a map library and map research service, and photogrammetry and chart-making groups. This operating entity is under the administrative control of the Commanding Officer of the Aeronautical Chart Service.

c. The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, in its Chart Division, has a library of maps and related technical publications, a geodetic and map research group, and a complete map-making unit, including its own reproduction plant. All of these are under one administrative head, the Chief of the Chart Division.

d. The U.S. Geological Survey has a specialized book and map library, several research units in different fields of geology and topography, and a map-making unit and reproduction plant, all under the administrative control of the Director of the Survey.

Operations in the instances described above vary in magnitude but it is clear that each Department has recognized the need for unified control of their map library, map research and map-making facilities within their organizations.

6. I am convinced that a transfer of the Map Library Division to the Reference Center would greatly handicap the constructive work of the three staffs within the Map Branch and would decrease the effectiveness of the map reference services now available to the CIA and other government agencies. Any advantage that might accrue from such a transfer, and I frankly fail to see any advantage, would be greatly out-weighted in my opinion by the very serious disadvantages that would result from such action. The day-to-day operating relationships between the Map Library Division and the Reference Center would not be handicapped by control of the Map Library Division remaining with the Map Branch. The personnel of other mapping agencies of the Government appreciate the unity of the Map Branch and are sympathetic toward its program. The important advances made by the Map Branch in developing effective coordination among the map library services of the Government might well be nullified if the present control of the Map Library Division were changed.

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